

Finding Aid of MSS 106: Michael Tames Civil War on Hatteras and Roanoke Islands Collection, 1861—1865

Descriptive Summary

Repository: Outer Banks History Center, Manteo, N.C.

Creator: Michael Tames

Title: MSS 106, Michael Tames Civil War on Hatteras and Roanoke Islands Civil War Collection, 1861—1865

Language of Materials: English

Location: For current information on the location of these materials, please contact the Outer Banks History Center, www.obhistorycenter.net.

Abstract:

Michael (“Mike”) Tames is an antiques and post card collector, Civil War and local history enthusiast, and long-time resident of Roanoke Island, N.C. He acquired this collection of Civil War letters over a period of nearly three decades, a letter, or grouping of letters, at a time. He maintains a web site, “The Civil War on Roanoke Island” that includes his personal story and vast research he has done.

This collection, or assemblage, of letters encompasses 85 letters from the Civil War period written by, or to, servicemen from Union and Confederate sides, along with 15 related documents, copies of Mike Tames’ research papers, and a CD-ROM disk. Materials are chiefly about engagements very early in the war: 1) on and near Hatteras Island, August, 1861; 2) the Battle of Roanoke Island, Feb. 7 and 8, 1862; and, 3) other engagements in northeastern North Carolina.

There are seven (7) series: Series 1 consists of 27 letters of Captain William S. Chace of the 4th Rhode Island Infantry from October 1861 to July 16, 1862. Series 2 consists of 31 letters of Thomas Love of the 89th New York from September 29th and a notification of his death; all directed to his wife. Series 3 consists of 24 letters pertaining to Civil War activity in northeastern North Carolina, mostly single and unrelated to each other. Series 4 includes 15 unrelated documents pertaining to Civil War activity in northeastern North Carolina. Series 5 includes 2 oversized items, both being letters from Series 3. Series 6 consists of research notes. Series 7 is a CD-ROM disk with digital copies of the original documents in this collection.

Extent:

101 items plus 2 folders of photocopied research notes.

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions:

Available for research.

Copyright Notice:

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Preferred Citation: [Identification of Item] Michael Tames Civil War on Hatteras and Roanoke Islands Civil War Collection, 1861—1865, Outer Banks History Center, Manteo, N.C., U.S.A.

Acquisitions Information:

Partially purchased, partially donated from Michael Tames, Manteo, N.C.

Processing Information**Processed by:**

Karen Lisbeth “KaeLi” Schurr

Finding aid by:

Karen Lisbeth “KaeLi” Schurr

Biographical/Historical Note:

North Carolina's Outer Banks was the setting for two important Civil War engagements. Union victories at Hatteras Inlet and Roanoke Island early in the war placed the area under Federal control and extended the blockade to the southern coast. The Hatteras Inlet bombardment began on August 27, 1861, on two small forts, Fort Hatteras and Fort Clark. Since the Confederate government placed a higher priority on conflicts in Virginia, the Hatteras Inlet forts were poorly equipped and the militia stationed there was poorly trained. Both forts fell within two days. The battle on Hatteras Island is significant in several ways; it was the first amphibious assault in U.S. Naval history, it was the first joint forces operation, and it was the first territory seized by the Union and held for the duration of the war.

A few months later, in February 1862, the Union assembled another fleet for an attack on Roanoke Island. Once again, the Confederate government had most of their forces committed to the defense of Richmond in spite of desperate pleas for reinforcements. Only 1400 soldiers were left to defend the island compared with the 13,000 men and 67 vessels commissioned by the Union. Though the Confederate soldiers fought to defend

the island, they were overwhelmed by the Union's far superior numbers. Hundreds of rebel troops were taken prisoner.

Federal occupation lasted for the duration of the war. A Freedmen's Colony on Roanoke Island provided safe haven under Union control for runaway slaves. It grew to over 3,000 residents with a school and church administered by northern missionaries. Black laborers were paid as artisans and laborers. Important intelligence from behind enemy lines was provided to the Federal troops and some of the nation's earliest black troops were enlisted from Roanoke Island.

Michael ("Mike") Tames is an antiques and post card collector, Civil War and local history enthusiast, and long-time resident of Roanoke Island, N.C. He acquired this collection of Civil War letters over a period of nearly three decades, a letter, or grouping of letters, at a time. He maintains a web site, "The Civil War on Roanoke Island" that includes his personal story and vast research he has done.

Collection Overview:

This collection, or more accurately "assemblage," encompasses 85 letters from the Civil War period written by, servicemen from Union and Confederate sides, along with 15 related documents, copies of Mike Tames' research papers, and a CD-ROM disk. Materials are chiefly about engagements very early in the war, on and near Hatteras Island, August, 1861; the Battle of Roanoke Island, Feb. 7 and 8, 1862; and, other engagements in northeastern North Carolina. For some there are transcripts and/or corresponding postal covers. Box #1 is an archival ring binder and documents are placed in archival sleeves, following the creator's format. Box #2 is an oversized pamphlet box. There are seven (7) series:

Series 1

Twenty-seven (27) letters of Captain William S. Chace of the 4th Rhode Island Infantry date from October 1861 when Chace was at Camp Sprague ¾ of a mile from the Capitol Washington when Union troops were beginning to assemble and end with a July 16, 1862 letter at a camp at Newport News, Va.

Letters are written from Camp Casey, Camp California, Naval Academy, Hatteras Inlet, Pamlico Sound, off Fort Bartow, Camp Park, hospital on battlefield near New Bern, Astor House, Fort Monroe, Camp at Newport News.

As part of the Burnside Expedition, Chace writes of being transported aboard the Eastern Queen, one of the 80 ships of the Burnside Expedition. He mentions the wreck of the steamer City of New York outside Hatteras Inlet and gives a summary of the Battle of Roanoke Island, activity in Elizabeth City, camping on Roanoke Island, Union allegiance by Islanders, and having a contraband servant, the Battle of New Bern (where he was wounded after receiving a bullet in the jaw) and his company wanting to avenge his injury and his expectations of a furlough.

There is a gap in the letters from March 18, 1862 – July 2, 1862. Presumably Chace was on furlough. His letter of July 10, 1862 from Fort Monroe states his regiment had just left for Beaufort and that his health is not good and complains of being weak and having no appetite. The final letter of July 16, 1862 also mentions these afflictions in addition to head aches and kidney complaints. Chase believes he is a burden on his unit and submits his resignation along with a supporting certificate from a doctor.

Letters are written to Chace's father, mother, John R. Chase; brother Henry, and sisters Harriette and Fanny.

General subjects are sending money home; request for mittens, slippers, envelopes; prediction for an early ending to the war; writing on paper "captured" at Roanoke Island; and receiving mail.

Also included are two Morning Reports of the North Carolina 7th Regiment, Company F, from August 24th, 1861, one of which is a completed form and the other is handwritten.

Series 2

Thirty two (32) letters of Thomas Love, 89th New York date from September 29th 1861 at Elmira, New York through October 25, 1862 at Pleasant Valley, Maryland. Letters are written to Love's wife, Jane Love, of Unadilla, New York. Thomas Love died while in service, probably from dysentery. The collection concludes with a letter from the Captain of his company informing Mrs. Love of her husband's death.

As part of the Burnside Expedition, Love writes of not knowing his destination aboard ship, wrecked ships and the loss of government property at Hatteras Inlet, the length of his stay aboard ship, poor water in camp at Hatteras, windy cold conditions at Hatteras, camping and drilling at Camp Winfield, description of Hatteras, travel to Roanoke Island on steamer Louisiana, soldiers looking for relics from the Battle of Roanoke Island, rumors heard about nearby fighting, troops going to Elizabeth City via boat, getting fired on by rebel troops, the Battle of Camden, troops leaving Roanoke Island for Plymouth and New Bern, troops taking the steamer Northerner to New Bern with two schooners in tow, getting to Norfolk via boat through rivers and swamps, description of Norfolk, receiving marching orders, hearing cannon fire at Fredericksburg, evacuation of Fredericksburg, images of Fredericksburg in Frank Leslie's Newspaper, regimental surgeons heading to Washington, Washington in danger of falling into rebel hands.

Letters are written from Elmira, NY, Washington, D.C., aboard ship near Ft. Monroe, Hatteras Inlet, Cape Hatteras, Hatteras Island, Camp Dickinson on Roanoke Island, Norfolk, Newport News, Fredericksburg, Aquia Creek, Antietam, Pleasant Valley, Maryland.

General subjects include meals in camp, receiving tobacco via mail, soldiers having measles, waiting for uniforms, bee hives stolen near camp, prediction for an early ending to the war, local fishermen at Hatteras, peach trees in blossom on Roanoke Island, a

soldier bitten by a water moccasin while bathing off Roanoke Island and dying, soldiers squandering pay on whiskey, waiting for McClellan to take Richmond, realizing the war might not end quickly, soldiers receiving goods from home send express, request for photos of children, falling ill and being taken to Washington in an ambulance but not receiving papers from his surgeon to be admitted to a hospital, purchasing medicine on his own, fear of the war enduring, newer regiments being more animated and encouraged than the older regiments, being sick in the hospital and asking his wife to send money to buy “delicacies” that might stimulate his poor appetite.

Series 3

Twenty-six (24) letters pertaining to Civil War activity in northeastern North Carolina, primarily Hatteras and Roanoke Islands. See the container list for specifics. Some have corresponding transcripts, postal covers and/or research notes.

Series 4

Fifteen (15) Documents pertaining to Civil War activity in northeastern North Carolina, primarily Hatteras and Roanoke Islands. See the container list for specifics.

Series 5

Oversized items. Two (2) letters, separated from Series 3 due to size.

Series 6

Research papers of Mike Tames'; photocopies primarily from web sites, some with annotations.

Series 7: CD-ROM disk with digital copies of the original items in this collection.

Collection Arrangement:

The 1st and 2nd series are groupings of letters penned by a single author, 27 by William S. Chace and 32 by Thomas Love, respectively, each arranged chronologically. The 3rd series is comprised of 24 single letters, by differing authors, arranged first by regiment, then by author, then chronologically. The 4th series contains 2 letters separated from Series 3 due to their size being too large to fit in the standard sized box. The 5th series is comprised of single and unrelated documents in no particular order. In the 6th series there are 3 groupings of research notes arranged by topic. The 7th series includes a single CD-RM disk with digital copies of all the original documents in this collection.

Online Catalog Headings:

These and related materials may be found under the following headings in online catalogs.

Subject Terms

Love, Thomas (d. 1862) – Correspondence
Chace, William S. -- Correspondence
Burnside's Expedition to North Carolina, 1862
North Carolina -- History -- Civil War, 1981-1865
North Carolina -- History -- Civil War, 1981-1865 -- Naval operations
North Carolina -- History -- Civil War, 1981-1865 – Personal narratives
New Bern, Battle of, New Bern, N.C., 1862
South Mills, Battle of, N.C., 1862
Soldiers -- Correspondence
Fort Hatteras (N.C.)
Fort Clark (N.C.)

Geographic Terms

Roanoke Island (N.C.)
Hatteras Island (N.C.)
New Bern (N.C.)
South Mills (N.C.)

Related Collections:

Additional information on topics found in this collection may be found in the Manuscript and Archives Reference System (MARS) <http://www.ncarchives.dcr.state.nc.us>.

See also:

The Outer Banks History Center has a vast amount of both primary and secondary materials regarding the Civil War in Coastal North Carolina. In addition to a large number of published books, regimental histories, diaries, and journals, the Center's holdings include: period newspapers, etchings and engravings from publications such as *Frank Leslie* and *Harper's*, original sketches and drawings, maps, and Civil War pension claims. Manuscript collections of note include:

33MSS-55 Civil War Letters
33MSS-27 Civil War Era Manuscripts, 1861 - 1863
33MSS-104 Edwin Graves Champney, Civil War Sketches
33MSS-62 James Wells Champney Sketchbooks

Container List:

Folder

1.1.1 Finding aid.

Series 1: William S. Chace Correspondence

Folder

1.2.1	Letters of Captain William S. Chace, 4th Rhode Island Infantry; October 1861 from Camp Sprauge “near Washington” through July 16, 1862 at Newport News, Va. 27 items.
	Series 2: Thomas Love Correspondence
Folder 1:3.1	Letters of Thomas Love, 89th New York; September 29th 1861 at Elmira, New York through October 25, 1862 at Pleasant Valley, Maryland; written to Love’s wife, Jane Love, of Unadilla, New York. 31 items.
Folder 1:3.2	Letter from the Captain of Thomas Love’s company informing Mrs. Love of her husband’s death. 1 item.
	Series 3: Correspondence: Individual letters pertaining to Civil War activity in northeastern North Carolina, Documents pertaining to Civil War activity in northeastern North Carolina, primarily Hatteras and Roanoke Islands. Some have transcripts, postal covers and/or research notes. 24 items.
Folder 1:4.1	3 rd Georgia, Asa Winn, from Proctors House; discusses “throwing up batteries,” moving camp, description of the island, taking a boat to Nags Head, Fort Raleigh; September 6, 1862.
Folder 1:4.2	3 rd Georgia, Asa Winn; account of the second day of the Chicamacomico Races; October 4, 1861.
Folder 1:4.3	4 th Rhode Island, unknown person “on board of the steamer eastern queen off fort Bartow, Roanoke Island”; regarding the Battle of Roanoke Island; February 11, 1862.
Folder 1:4.4	Connecticut regiment (presumed), James Kelly, staff officer for one of the generals; regarding the Battle of Roanoke Island; February 27, 1862.
Folder 1:4.5	10 th Connecticut (presumed), unknown person; “from Croatan Sound”; regarding the Battle of Roanoke Island; February 26, 1862.
Folder 1:4.6	10 th Connecticut, William L. Norton; Battle of Roanoke Island w/ hand drawn map; March 3, 1862.
Folder 1:4.7	23 rd Massachusetts Co. E, William B. Alexander, Commanded 30# Parrott on board <i>Hussar</i> ; Observations before, during and after the battle. January 2, 1862.
Folder	

1:4.8	24 th Massachusetts Co. B, William B. Hammond; discusses the Battle of Roanoke Island and its aftermath; February 18, 1862.
Folder 1:4.9	27 th Massachusetts, unknown person; Battle of Roanoke Island; February 16, 1862.
Folder 1:4.10	8 th Connecticut (presumed), John Morrarty; Battle of Roanoke Island; February 9, 1862.
Folder 1:4.11	51 st Pennsylvania, Enoch B. Kirby; observations of Roanoke Island, wants to buy slave, shooting cow and butchering it for rations; February 27, 1862.
Folder 1:4.12	51 st Pennsylvania, David Campbell from Camp Burnside, Roanoke Island to his father; February 26, 1862.
Folder 1:4.13	Headquarters Roanoke Island, from General A.E. Burnside to Secy of War Staunton recommending the promotion of a soldier; February 22, 1862.
Folder 1:4.14	6 th New Hampshire, N.B. Tobin, Battle of South Mills; April 26, 1862.
Folder 1:4.15	89 th New York, William Fredenberg addressing the Battle of South Mills; May 29, 1862.
Folder 1:4.16	89 th New York, unknown person, discusses the "Monitor" firing blank cartridges; March 28, 1862.
Folder 1:4.17	89 th New York, George Arnott; March 24, 1862.
Folder 1:4.18	103 rd Pennsylvania, Jonathan Gable; a love letter; May 5, 1865.
Folder 1:4.19	103 rd Pennsylvania, W.S. Armstrong, discusses three Confederate prisoners, names forts; May 25, 1865.
Folder 1:4.20	30 th U.S. Colored Infantry, addresses discipline within the regiment; October 12, 1865.
Folder 1:4.21	30 th U.S. Colored Infantry, Henry B. Durham; discusses weather, living conditions; November 14, 1865.
Folder 1:4.22	Hatteras Inlet, W. Lamoroux, from Hatteras Island; discusses food and animals; June 16, 1862.
Folder	

1:4.23	Steamer Underwriter, Hatteras Inlet, William Miller; discusses local life; November 14, 1861.
Folder 1:4.24	4 th Rhode Island Band, Beaufort Harbor; sword presented by the Rhode Island Vols. to Burnside; June 22 1862.
Series 4: Documents pertaining to Civil War activity in northeastern North Carolina, primarily Hatteras and Roanoke Islands; 15 items.	
Folder 2:5.1	89 th New York, Account of Pay, Corporal Coe Coleman; May, 1862.
Folder 2:5.2	6 th New Hampshire, Discharge, McIntire, March 3 rd , 1862.
Folder 2:5.3	6 th New Hampshire, Discharge, Morse, March 3 rd , 1862.
Folder 2:5.4	6 th New Hampshire, Discharge, Giles, March 3 rd , 1862.
Folder 2:5.5	5 th Rhode Island, Capt. Charles Taft from Ft. Parke, N. C.; Abstract of Expenditures, Part of the 2 nd Quarter, 1864.
Folder 2:5.6	16 th Connecticut Elida Kies; Two (2) Pay Documents, 1864.
Folder 2:5.7	1 st U.S.Colored Infantry at Roanoke Island; Quartermaster, List of Stores Received from Lt. R. P. Parker, July 12, 1865;
Folder 2:5.8	103rd Pennsylvania, from Albemarle Hospital, Roanoke Island; request for detail of 6 men to help with police duty; April 27, 1865.
Folder 2:5.9	Third Auditor's Office, Treasury Dept., John Wilson, Auditor, to H.A. Oakman, Lt. Col. Comdg. Post, Roanoke Island, N.C.; claim of Wilson Gregory ("Colored laborer") referred to Chief of Engineer Department; October 28, 1865.
Folder 2:5.10	Fort Hatteras, from Wm. Sutton, Recruiting Officer; Enlistment of James Malpass; August 10, 1861.
Folder 2:5.11	1 st US Artillery, Co. E, from Adjutant General's Office, conferring promotion of Wm. K. Pollack to 2 nd Lieutenant and ordering him to Hatteras Inlet; March 26, 1862.
Folder 2:5.12	Postal covers (envelopes); circulated and postmarked to Roanoke Island; 3 items. Various dates and derivations.
Folder	Series 5: Oversized items; separated from Series 3 due to size.

2:6.1	89th New York, Charles H. Amsbury; spoke of weather, food brought to island, brigade sutler at Ft. Bartow; May 5, 1862.
Folder	
2:6.2	23 rd Massachusetts Co. E, William B. Alexander; on board the US Gunboat <i>Hussar</i> ; January 12, 1862.
	Series 6: Research papers of Mike Tames'; photocopies primarily from web sites, some with annotations.
Folder	
2:7.1	Research papers of Mike Tames' relating to the letters of Captain William S. Chace from series 1.
2:7.2	Research papers of Mike Tames' relating to the letters of Thomas Love from series 1.
2:7.3	Research papers of Mike Tames' relating to the Hatteras and Roanoke Island engagements.
Folder	
2:8.1	Series 7: CD-ROM disk with digital copies of the original items in this collection.